

Population Growth (Harold F. Dorn), Population Growth in Underdeveloped Areas (Irene B. Taeuber), Population and Economic Development (Ansley J. Coale), Population Growth in the United States (Donald J. Bogue), Resources in the United States and the World (Joseph L. Fisher and Neal Potter), The Problem of Population Control (Frank W. Notestein, Dudley Kirk and Sheldon Segal), and Issues of Population Policy (Frank Lorimer).

Mr. Donald Bogue is outspoken in his commentary upon the rapid rate of population growth in the United States, and puts in a welcome plea for an immediate programme of re-education in order to bring about a change of attitude in that country towards the size of the family. In his summing-up, however, Mr. Frank Lorimer is less committed on the subject. Messrs. Fisher and Potter assemble a useful collection of data on resources and attempt a projection of them to the end of the present century; on this basis they are able to take an encouraging view of the immediate prospects, at least so far as highly developed countries are concerned. The article by three authors on population control presents a useful summary of present-day problems and prospects and this too ends with a confident note on current trends and hopes. The writers of the other essays do not commit themselves so far as to be optimistic or pessimistic but present a good, clear summary of the facts; designed for the purposes of the Conference, their papers do not seek to supply any new methods of analysis or the results of fresh research.

These differences of outlook are characteristic of most symposia; while refreshing to the Conference participants they do not make for an entirely coherent work when published in book form. Nevertheless, in the present instance it is possible at least to know what were the views reached by the eighty or so assembled delegates—representing many important institutions in American life. They agreed—to summarize the thirty or so decisions and recommendations reached—that present rates of population growth around the world cannot be maintained indefinitely; that birth rates and family size must be reduced; that the United Nations should do more about it; that U.S.

aid to emergent countries should be redesigned so as to help more with population problems; and that in the United States efforts should be made to cultivate "*a sense of responsibility concerning marriage and parenthood*" and that a national Commission should be set up to inform the Government and the people of the nature and implications of population problems.

Members of the Eugenics Society will cordially welcome these conclusions—especially the one printed in italics—and find much in them with which they can agree unreservedly. Is the way becoming more open in the United States for the development of eugenic policies? It would seem so, but it must be confessed that none of the writers of this volume has dealt directly with the eugenic question or the important issues it raises.

P. R. C.

Osborn, Fairfield (Editor). *Our Crowded Planet: Essays on the Pressures of Population*. London, 1963. Allen and Unwin. Pp. 192. Price 21s.

FAIRFIELD OSBORN HAS rendered a real service by gathering together special contributions from a score of eminent people. He has done so "from the conviction that the inordinately rapid increase of populations... is the most essential problem which faces *everybody everywhere*." The cognoscenti of to-day—and happily their number does at last quite clearly increase—will perhaps not learn so much that is new to them. Those coming new to the wider recognition of the problem will gain much perspective and the realization that historians, economists and others far beyond the biologists have at last taken alarm. The wise observer of socio-biological phenomena includes the interplay of religion and reproduction within his spectrum of interest. He will find both interest and sadness in the contribution from a leading Roman Catholic fighting a rearguard action against the pressures of reality. The negativeness of that attitude is in such marked contrast with the humanity of Dr. John Rock, the notable Roman Catholic gynaecologist, who reduces the religio-philosophical problem of his Church to the quality of the motivation in each act of contraception.

There is no space here for comment upon the

special contributions of world leaders in their own lines, for example, Eugene Black, Boyd Orr, Arnold Toynbee, Walter Lowdermilk, André Maurois and others. It must suffice to mention those two past Presidents of the Eugenics Society, Sir Charles Darwin, whose view is essentially gloomy and mathematical, and Sir Julian Huxley, who in a peroration conjures up so vigorous a vision of what man can, will and must achieve in an enhanced quality of life for deliberately limited numbers. He starts his ultimate paragraph thus:

I would say that this vision, of the possibilities of wonder and more fruitful fulfilment on the one hand as against frustration and increasing misery and regimentation on the other, are the twentieth-century equivalents of the traditional Christian view of salvation as against damnation.

G. C. L. BERTRAM

INFANT MORTALITY

Butler, Neville R. and Bonham, Dennis G. *Perinatal Mortality: The First Report of the 1958 British Perinatal Mortality Survey under the auspices of the National Birthday Trust Fund.* Edinburgh, 1963. Livingstone. Pp. xvi + 304. Price 30s.

THIS REPORT IS a worthy monument to the work inspired by the National Birthday Trust Fund and represents probably the most thorough and competent study of its kind that has been undertaken anywhere. It consists of a national review of 16,994 singleton births which took place during March 3rd to 9th, 1958 and 7,117 singleton stillbirths and neonatal deaths which occurred during March to May 1958. Completed questionnaires represented 98 and 94 per cent respectively of national returns during these periods, covering England, Wales and Scotland. Findings on multiple pregnancies are to be presented elsewhere.

There were marked regional differences in perinatal mortality (i.e. deaths within the first seven days from birth) which was generally worse in the north and west and better in the south and east. Variations in the incidence of congenital malformations were a major factor in raising mortality in the south-western region and in reducing it in the eastern region. Haemoglobin testing too, revealed marked regional

variation: generally the incidence of anaemia was highest in the north and west and lowest in the south and east. Increasing perinatal mortality with rising maternal age after thirty years was once more confirmed. The over-forty woman has double the average risk. When the mother is under twenty, she has a 23 per cent greater chance of losing her baby soon after birth than when she falls into the twenty–twenty-four age group. The lowest perinatal mortality of any, however, was recorded for the twenty-five–twenty-nine maternal age group, which had a ratio of eighty-six compared with eighty-seven for the twenty–twenty-fours.

Writing in 1943, Professor Titmuss (in *Birth, Poverty and Wealth*) stressed that although overall infant mortality had halved between 1911 and 1932, the inequality gradient of social class in respect of neonatal mortality had not apparently changed at all. The present report shows that this gradient still persists. It states that if 100 represents the overall perinatal mortality rate for all classes combined, the rate is found to rise from sixty-four in social class 1 (professional) to 128 in social class 5 (unskilled workers). The children of unmarried mothers have a 60 per cent greater prospect of an early death than other children. Compared with the children born to the wife of a professional man, the illegitimates have a two to one greater likelihood of dying in the first week of their lives.

There is a marked association of mortality with parity as well as with maternal age. It is demonstrably about four times as dangerous to be born into a large family of an unskilled worker than into the small family of a professional man.

The report lays stress on the need for improved prenatal care; cases with no prenatal care had five times the overall national mortality. It is stated that social factors having a direct impact on the individual woman and her reproductive health—the level of education, the timing of pregnancy in relation to marriage, the interval between births, the extent of physical activity during pregnancy and their effects on ante-natal care, prematurity and mortality, are to be dealt with in a later report. The problem of family planning will no doubt be discussed in those connections. The facts already presented